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never was, nor is, nor e'er shall be." But partiality has not blinded us to their defects, which originated in the infirmity of human nature. In endeavouring to keep the middle way, as they trod a narrow path, all their discernment aided by upright intention, was insufficient to keep them always steady. They would sometimes be hurried away by complaisance to their guests into a participation in the tale of slander; would wing the shaft of ridicule, and by doing so, sometimes add credibility to a malignant falsehood. Mr. Revel has been known to waste at a card table, or at a noisy club dinner the hours, he would rather have passed with his beloved family, where the scene was occasionally varied and enlivened by the visit of some person justly respected for talents and information.

Mrs. Revel too on some occasions has been known to act at variance with her feelings, and in compliance with fashion, to crowd into a room a number of people she scarcely knew by name, and whom she could not have esteemed on a more intimate acquaintance: at those times too, she has been drawn into a style of dress, which, though modest in comparison with that *authorised by fashion*, however, gave her pain in the reflection.

It must appear by this delineation, that while the visitors and acquaintances of such persons were numerous, their intimates and friends must have been few. In those admitted to the latter favoured distinction, they required information, mental refinement, benevolent feeling, and rectitude of principle. The possessors of these qualifications were admitted to the most winning confidence, and treated with respect, even though they could not make so elegant a bow as Mr. **** nor trifle away a whole evening with such success as Beau ****, nor display such white teeth as Captain ****. If the diamond was polished, they were the more pleased; if not, they were too discerning to throw it away, or to undervalue it.

In consequence of this out-o'-the-way mode of thinking, persons were numbered among their private and preferred visitors, who would have been laughed at as odd mortals by the coterie-kings and queens. Such beings would not

have known sequences from pair-royals, and would have been more puzzled to distinguish between trumps and honours at whist, than a grey headed politician to divide the *expedient* from the *right*. As to the faculty of whispering soft nonsense in the fair one's ear, so enviable, because of the certain introduction it furnishes to the favour of the fair, they were totally unqualified for it, by having obstinately conceived and supported the notion, that conversation should be an interchange of instruction.

Their disapprobation of round games, questions and commands, &c. had excited some ridicule; to them, they said, the sight of masters and misses arrived at the *YEARS of discretion*, and set down to such games was painful; but they were laughed at for their pains, as these sports in the judgment of those who practise them, were *vastly funny*.

In my humble opinion however, our friends were to blame for endeavouring to decry such amusements: for it is unjust to condemn a man for pursuing those enjoyments, which are most suited to his taste and capacity, and in this case we know "the sports of children satisfy the child."

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

YOUR Commercial Reporter, for the month of September, has become the panegyrist of paper money, singing its praise above gold, *even above fine gold*, and he ventures to predict great benefit to our trade, by a general circulation of paper, and asserts that when notes become general, guineas will bear no premium, or at most a very trifling one; for he says that in England where guineas and notes are taken in payment without distinction, there is no premium on gold; but any person who has attended to our Parliamentary discussions for some years past, must be of a different opinion, particularly to the report of a committee appointed to investigate the financial difficulties of Ireland: it appeared in evidence, before that committee, that 2½ per cent. was given in London to procure gold: the unfavourable ex-

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change with foreign countries proves the same fact, that bank of England notes have suffered a depreciation. Your Reporter admitted that if bank notes are issued too largely, great disadvantage will arise to trade; but then he says; "If the bank of Ireland act prudently in their issue, they must necessarily check the inordinate issue of private banks." Did not your Reporter know, that the Directors of the Bank of Ireland had acted both imprudently and improvidently? The committee to whom I have already alluded, impute all the calamities of a depreciated currency to the conduct of the Bank Directors. Mr. Foster and Mr. Parnell in their publications upon this subject, have also given them the blame. Mr. Parnell says, "That whilst they were obliged to pay their notes in specie, a certain degree of caution was necessary in extending their discounts, and it was impossible for them to make their issues excessive. When this obligation to pay in specie was removed, they were at once relieved from a restraint which they must have always considered as a great obstacle in the way of their interests; and it would appear from what has since taken place, that the liberty they acquired obliterated every sentiment of duty to the public, and gave vent only to such feelings and such measures as could only be the result of an inordinate thirst for gain. The depreciation of their paper cannot now be viewed in any other light, than as a work of usury. The violation of every money contract in the kingdom has been of no weight in the scale, when placed in competition with the five per cent to be made by accommodating the merchants of Dublin."

It appears then that those guardians of the commercial interests of Ireland, have not acted prudently, and we have the authority of a parliamentary report, as well as Mr. Foster's and Mr. Parnell's publication, for this assertion.

If great disadvantages will arise to trade by an extravagant issue, which, as your Reporter very properly observes, "raises the price of manufactures, and increases the expenses of living, by enhancing the price of the

necessaries of life"....Why, then, does he argue for an extension of paper credit, except upon the supposition that the Bank Directors will act prudently in future? But it appears that after their conduct had been severely censured in parliament, in the early part of 1803, after the writings of Mr. Boyd, Sir Francis Baring, Mr. Thornton and Lord King, they had again yielded to the temptation of gain, and the increase in their issue was no less in the short period between February and November, than £328,179. Lord King has shown that at the time the restriction commenced in 1797, the Bank of Ireland notes had advanced from £737,268, to the immense sum of £2,633,864.

In February, 1803, during the same period, the English bank notes from 11,103,880*l.* to 13,108,560*l.* Thus we see that by the act for suspending the payments in specie, a power has been given to a commercial body, which is not entrusted, by the constitution, even to the executive government: the whole personal property and monied interest of the country are committed to this mercantile company, not responsible to the legislature, and not known to the constitution. Perhaps your Reporter might allege that the quantity of the circulating medium should increase, as the industry and demands of the country increase. That is granted; but there is no reason to suppose that the industry of Ireland has increased so much as to require this addition to the circulating medium; besides, currency is to be distinguished from capital. By some writers it is stated to be in the ratio as one to an hundred: let a sum as 100 be added to the capital, and it will perhaps not require a greater sum than one to be added to the currency. It has been shown, by a superfluity of proofs, that a depreciated paper-currency has been the cause of much distress to Ireland, and a writer in mentioning this subject, says, "That it happened that the land proprietors, and the trading body of the province of Ulster refused to receive bank notes, and the consequences have been, that coin never ceased to circulate in that part of the country; that the exchange be-

tween it and London remained favourable; and that its *inhabitants have been strangers to the distresses which have afflicted the South.*" But the trading people of the North are no longer, it seems, to maintain the high character of prudence and foresight which they have so long supported; they are urged by writers in newspapers and others, to encourage the circulation of paper-money, to force trade beyond the demands which support it; to promote undue speculation; raise the price of manufactures; cause a dearth of provisions, subject the ignorant and poorer classes of the people to the chance of forgery! In such a state of things the calamities of this class of mankind must be inconceivably great: for, as Mr. Harrison very properly observes, "Gold is not subject to abuses, and cannot be made the means of such irresistible and irretrievable distress to individuals like paper-money, which rests entirely on opinion, and which, by an over-strained system, may vanish as a shadow, and in the place of opulence and power, leave only the ashes of a rag."

Many of the enlightened inhabitants of the town of Belfast have become the advocates of paper, and particularly the notes of a private bank, in their own town, although they made a noble stand against notes for a long time. Why encourage the paper of private banks? Will they not increase the quantity of the circulating medium, when the country is already inundated with too great a quantity of national paper. It is true that the notes of private banks, being payable in bank of Ireland notes, may have some effect in checking the issue of the former; but then public confidence may support their paper until the issue of it is excessive....the temptation of profit having such a powerful effect on the mind of man.

The Belfast Bankers are men of opulence and great respectability, but have not other private bankers of great respectability issued an extravagant quantity of their paper, and caused much embarrassment to the merchant, manufacturer, and tradesmen; for although confidence may support paper for a time, yet paper cannot always sup-

port confidence. Public credit is suspicious asleep; but when the suspicion is awakened, then all the evils of too extensive a credit are felt. We are told in this report, "that we cannot procure a sufficiency of guineas on *any terms* for the general purposes of trade," yet in another part of this report, we are told "that the terms or premium on guineas, is much less than it was formerly." If the discount is now not much more than 3 per cent, and that it was formerly as this report tells us, "from 8 to 10 per cent; how then can it be said now that gold cannot be got on any terms? When the premium on gold was so high as 10 per cent, no argument was then made use of by the Belfast merchants, for the dis-use of guineas; but now we must throw aside the precious metal, when it is more easily obtained, to give room for banking monopoly, although these same merchants discouraged the circulation of the notes of other private banks, some of them observing very justly, that such inordinate issues of paper, would ultimately injure the commercial interests of the country. Surely there is a sufficiency of gold to answer all the purposes for which it is wanted, in a small district of the North. Lord Lauderdale is of opinion, that the quantity of it in Ireland has rather increased than diminished, since the restriction. This able politician in his publication, entitled "*Thoughts on the alarming state of the circulation, and on the means of redressing the pecuniary grievances of Ireland,*" established these propositions:

1. That the difference existing between the value of gold and the national paper, arises from the depreciation of the paper:

2. That the increase of bank paper, is the sole cause of its depreciation:

3. That the reduction of the quantity of bank paper, is the only remedy for the existing evil.

He states the amount of the bank of Ireland notes, at the time he wrote, to be 3,000,000*l.* that is five times the quantity that were in circulation before the restriction bill: his Lordship thinks that if the present excessive issues of paper were restricted, and the bank confined to a certain quantity, coin would again come into use. In my opinion we should endeavour to keep

it in circulation in this corner of the kingdom, while we have it. Our alarming situation has arrested the attention of many enlightened and patriotic statesmen in different parts of the British Empire. When they have exposed errors, and offered many useful lessons for our instruction, shall we then disregard such important admonition, and by parting with what gold remains amongst us, assist in hurrying on all the evils of an inordinate issue of paper money?

J. P.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

MY inquiry respecting an Ink that will stand the operation of bleaching, through the different processes, when the oxy-muriatic acid is used, still remains without a satisfactory answer. To be complete, it must resist the operation of the alkalies

which are used in the first processes of bleaching, and of the oxy-muriates, used in the latter stages. Your correspondent, Tyro, suggests printers' ink. It will, however, not answer, for even a weak alkaline solution discharges it. I particularly solicit practical information on the subject.

Weavers are in the practice of sometimes marking the progress of their work in a manner which is found to stand the operation of all the different processes of bleaching. And I have understood the instrument they use is a piece of the grey willow, made black in the fire, and then dipped in butter.

Might we not, from this circumstance, get a hint for making a permanent ink? In this case the component articles appear to be carbon and oil, perhaps combined with the peculiar matter of the grey willow.

A LINENDRAPER.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

THE HISTORY OF HAROUN AL-RASCHID.

THE name of Haroun Al-raschid is so familiar to most readers, that a compilation, purporting to relate the principal events of his life, might seem at first to require an apology. On perusal, however, it will be found, that the Haroun Al-raschid of history differs much from the facetious night-wanderer of Oriental romance, and that most of what is detailed of him by the historians of his reign, will present him in a point of view essentially different from that in which we are accustomed to behold him. If we chuse to moralise on the matter, we may reflect on the falsehood of those names too frequently bestowed on kings, which may have flattered their own blind vanity, but have afterwards accompanied their character downwards through time, with all the damning effect of sneering irony: for Al-raschid, or *the just*, seems to have been little deserved by this prince, who appears to have acted, in most instances, with the unfeeling caprice of a despot, and not with the mature deliberation of

one, who strove to award to all their due.

In the year of the Hegira 100, which answers to 718 of our era, Mahomet, great grandson of Abbas, the uncle of the impostor Mahomet, laid claim to the Khalifat, then in the possession of Omar II. His attempt succeeded, and he became the founder of the Abbasside race, which maintained their sway through a series of 37 Khalifs and a period of nearly 500 years.

Haroun Al-Raschid was the fifth Khalif of this race, and succeeded his brother Hadi according to the appointment of their father Mahadi. This appointment seems to have been displeasing to Hadi; who acted on every occasion toward Haroun, so as to testify his displeasure, and in some instances displayed great meanness of disposition. Mahadi had left to Haroun, as a pledge of the succession to which he had appointed him in the event of his brother's death, a remarkably handsome ruby set in a ring. This the Khalif wished much to get from Haroun, and sent an eunuch to demand it of him. Haroun was walk-